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HUMBLE ADVICE TO THE CONFORMING AND NON-CONFORMING MINISTERS AND PEOPLE,

Adams 8.67.11

How to behave themselves under the present Liberty.

By the AUTHOR of Toleration not to be abus'd.

LONDON:
Printed for *James Collins* at the Kings Arms in *Ludgate-street*, 1673.

ADVICE.

TO THE CONFORMISTS and Non-Conformists.

SOme, that think I have ſufficiently diſcovered both the *ſin* and the *danger* of the preſent *Separation*, deſire I would further conſider what may be ſeaſonable to offer by way of *remedy*: but when the *foundations are out of courſe*, what can I ſay or do?

Our Church now ſuffers as the Church of *Corinth* did, by *ſchiſm* and *prophaneneſs*: and we have noted, that our Diviſions and Separations are the cauſe of the *firſt*, which (as I have ſhewn General.

in another place) can no way be fully removed, but by our *reunion* in the publick *Temple* Worſhip: as our *prophaneneſs*, the other great miſchief and diſeaſe of the time, by a ſpeedy, and hearty, and general *reformation* of life.

There is a comfort attending good *endeavours*, even when there is but little hope of *ſucceſs*: wherefore, if it be not a preſumption to follow the example of one otherwiſe minded, I ſhall venture to produce my *direction*; and what I humbly conceive to be the *preſent duty* both of the *Conformiſts* and *Non-Conformiſts*, in order to the ſecuring the Church from total *ſhipwreck* in the preſent *ſtorm*; adding my *petition* alſo, that *both* would lay it to *heart*.

It is a time of *liberty*, and men are very apt to do what seemeth *right in their own eyes*: and I could even wish that they would do so in earnest; if they would first wipe off the dust of *prejudice* and *passion*. For I doubt not but we are generally convinced by the *Gospel*, which we all profess, that it is indeed our *duty*, and *interest* too, to *love one another*, yea to forbear and yield to one another, yea to *deny our selves* in the little satisfaction of having our *own wills* and our own ways in small and *indifferent* things for the *publick good*; and to follow *peace* and *holiness* with a *conscience void of offence towards God and all men*.

But that I may be a little more particular. I cannot believe that we indeed differ about the existence of *Heaven* and *Hell*; or in our notions of true *Godliness*, as More particular.

ſome in their heats have intimated: or that our wiſeſt Adverſaries think, whatever they ſay, that the *Eccleſiaſtical Powers* and Courts are meerly *mercenary*, or do really and intentionally encourage Vice, or diſcountenance ſolid and *true picty*: yet my hearty and humble requeſt to them, in the firſt place, is, that they would conſider; 1. What the cauſe of their preſent *Contempt* may be; and whether ſomething be not too juſtly imputable to *our ſelves*, which ought not to be carefully ſearcht and *reform'd* before it be too *late*. Methinks 'tis adviceable, now you have ſo little to do with *Schiſm*, that you ſo turn the edge of your *power* againſt *prophanneſs*, as it may appear you are as heartily againſt *this* as *that*; and that none may think any longer, they

they have cause to leave us as *enemies to God* and godliness, and good men.

I have reason to affirm, that zeal was never guilty of a grosser slander, then by saying, that the *present Clergy* of the Church of *England*, is generally ignorant, idle, prophane, and opposers of godliness; under which guilt I heartily pray that none may die impenitent. Sure, if this zeal had any *ground* or *love*, it would be more *Regular*, and follow Mr. *Baxter's* good advice, and by proper complaint and proof endeavour, at least, our *Reformation* or *Ejection*. But 'tis too too uncharitable and groundless. I am confident, it is nearer to truth to say, that this Church hath not been blessed with a more Able, regular, and *pious Clergy*, these *hundred* years

The Clergy.

(and then I might say a *thousand*) then at present; which I mention not to *flatter*, but to encourage my brethren to *perseverance* and continuance in Well-doing, under all such hard Speeches of *ignorance* and *malice* against them.

Too many faulty.

Yet it cannot be denied, that the few *ignorant* and *scandalous* Ministers, found here and there amongst us, are *too many*: and untill the power of the *Bishops*, both as to the *Admission* and *ejection* of Ministers be more enlarged, and better *Countenanc'd* by *Law*, we may wish a through amendment in this particular till our *hearts ake*; yet these slanderers might know that the *Church* is purged of some such notorious *Scandalous* persons daily, where the *power* of the Church *can* do it: and where it *cannot*, we

we ſhould pity, and not *clamour*. Would the *Patrons* be pleaſed to consider their great *truſt* a little better, they might lay a *foundation* of better hopes for the *future*: and O that the *Lord of the Harveſt* would put it into all their hearts, not onely to diſpoſe of their gifts *freely*, but *wiſely*; and firſt to take advice with able *unconcerned* perſons before they preſent their *Clerks* to the *Biſhop*; that there might be no *temptation* upon him to admit the *unworthy* for fear of a *Quare impedit*. Patrons.

But, my brethren, (I mean you who are not aſhamed to be called *Conformiſts*) may not *conſcience* of our duty ſupply all the real or ſuppoſed defects in the *Law*? why ſhould any of our *lives* be a ſhame to the *beſt* profeſſion? why ſhould Omiſſion, male-

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Administration of our *Office*, cause the *Philistims* to *triumph*, or *blaspheme* that holy Name by which we are called, both as *Christians* and *Ministers*? Do our Enemies strike us in *Malice*, and is it not in our power to turn it to our *benefit*? Let the *Dagger* that is intended to *stab*, open our *Impostume*, and let out our *Corruption*.

Do your whole Office.

1. *Consider your Calling*, and know that both God and man, and the Souls of your People, and the credit of Religion, and and the present Security of the Church of God, expects your diligence and faithfulness in the *Duties* of it; and it is but *reason*, your Enemies being Judges. One that is no great Friend,

Reflect on Toleration not to be abused, 3

faith of us, *They should consider, that the Declaration requires of them exact Conformity; and indeed it is but rea-*

reasonable (saith he) *that those who will Conform, should be exact in the doing of it.* Let not the abuse of Liberty in others wear out the Sence, or abate the performance of your Office; for you know you are obliged both to be *Sincere* and *Intire*, wanting nothing, either of *Inward* or *Outward* Worship required at your hands: Thus you will *fulfil your Ministry* indeed; and doubt not, but *Duty* will ever answer it self to God and Man, when little Arts and Devices for *Sinister ends* run into the dark to hide themselves.

Preach better.

2. Why should it be said, that the *Non-Conformists* do out-*preach* us? Have they better *Parts*, or more *Learning?* It cannot be said. Hath *Use* procured them a better *Habit*, or *Knack* of Preaching, as they call it? I can hardly

ly believe it: if in any it be so, 'tis not generally; and where it is, let it be our *shame*: let it quicken our *study and practice* for our improvement. Are they *affectionate*, so be ye: are they *practical and pious*, so be ye. Never be ashamed to learn good of an *enemy*; especially when by that good you shall not onely be more effectual for the good of your people, but remove a scandal from your persons and office, and the whole Church of *England*, that suffers by some pitiful and careless Preachers.

Mind the Rule of Preaching.

Especially let us consider the *rule* and *end* of our Preaching: the rule is the plain *Word of God*, and the Doctrine of it, as it lies in the *Doctrine* of our own *Church*. I need not tell you what advantage our Adversaries take from our *juvenile* extravagancies

Reflect on p. 13.

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in this kind: they tell us that many preach *Socinianism*, and make the *practice* of such (most unreasonably!) no small *reason* of their *Non-Conformity*. But is it a matter of *praise* to us, that the *Non-Conformists* shall plead their kindness to the *Doctrine* of our *own Church* against us? Is it indeed *our glory* to use this *liberty* in *Doctrine*, and their *shame* to use the like in *practice*? Is there no *Non-Conformity* in point of *Doctrine*? Is it wholly contracted into the *one point* of *Worship*? To what end did you subscribe the *Articles*? To what end did you promise otherwise at your *Ordination*? When you forsake your *Youth*, I hope you will leave this *vanity*, whereby you indiscreetly disturb the Church, and open the mouths of *gainsayers* to very little purpose: and though it is but your

your own *personal folly* to do so, and cannot possibly have an influence upon our *publick Doctrine*, as weak men would fear: yet *shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.*

The End of Preaching.

Consider also the *end* of Preaching. Design nothing so much in contriving and uttering your Sermons, as the *saving your selves and those that hear you.* Preach *faith* and *repentance*, and the plain practical *Catechetical* points, with that solidness and zele that may commend you, not to the idle *Humms*, but the very *Consciences* of your *hearers:* while with full evidence they are convinced, that you desire their good, and design their *happiness*; and no temptation may be left them to forsake your Ministry *for their edification.* Let nothing savour of Self-esteem, Self-seeking, or re-

revenge upon *persons* or *parties*; or of flattery and connivance at sin in any; have no jerks or *reflections* at true *piety* or strictness of life in any. Let a formal, dull, and flat spirit of indifferency in Religion be far from you; for why should you *preach* away your people? Whatever you imagine, this is not your *wisdom*; *he that wins souls is wise.*

Yet you must consider also, Catechise. that all your duty is not discharged when you have *read prayers* and *preacht a Sermon*; lay a *foundation* for the establishment of the next (and we hope better) Age, by *Catechising* the Younger sort, and opening the *fundamental* points of the Catechism to them. Labour to be serious and seasonable in your Discourses to the *Sick*; and be ready to Visit them upon all occasions. And take

take all opportunities to *discountenance Vice*, and Vanity; and to imprint upon your People undoubted apprehensions of *Piety* both of your *Persons* and *Calling*: For certainly, *something* else should shew us to be *Ministers* of God, besides our habit, especially, when *that* is *despised*.

Shame Vice.

We pray dayly, that the *Ministers* of God may be *endowed* or *cloathed with Righteousness*: It is a *Garment* as well for *defense* as for *Ornament*, both of our Selves, and the *Church* of God; who usually is wounded through the *Sides*, and suffers reproach, by the real or pretended *looseness* of her *Clergy*. I have reason to think your very Enemies know you are much slandered: Yet 'tis pity your *Lives* should be other then such, as no imputation can fasten upon you. The Fire is

Lest the Church suffer.

is kindled, O Lord, let the *Sons of Levi be purged as Gold and Silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in Righteousness.*

Where the *Laws* have determined you, make them your *Rule*; but in *other* things let me beseech you to shew your *Charity* and love of Peace, and (as much as in you lieth) your *inoffensiveness* to such as *despise* and *persecute* you, as our *common Lord* hath commanded you: For, *except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the* Scribes *and Pharisees, you are not worthy of the Kingdome of Heaven.*

The Laws our Rule: but Love also.

I fear some of us have very needlesly stirred a Spirit of Jealousie in our Brethen against us these *three* ways; 1. By slighting the *Office* of *Preaching*. 2. By taking *new methods* in the use of that Office. 3. By speaking

unwarily in the favour of *Popery*: And seeing your *Adversaries* have objected them *all* against us, give me leave to take notice of the *offence*, and to speak my mind *freely* and *plainly* upon each of them.

Slight not Preaching.

For the first touching the Office of *Preaching*: I am not ignorant, that the *Temple* is called the *House of Prayer*: And I can by no means consent with them, that *compare* it with, much less with them that *prefer* Preaching before *Prayer*.

Matt. 28. 19.

I know also, that the *Apostles* had their great *Commission* to Preach, that they might teach the *Nations*, and convert the Infidel *World* to *Christianity*; yet the Disciples were to be taught afterwards, *v.* 20. And it cannot be denied, but that they were *first* sent to the *House of Israel*, and that they accordingly Preach'd to the *Jews*,

Jews, who were yet the *Church of God*: Among whom our *Lord* himself open'd the *Scriptures*, that is *Preached in the Temple*. And I think it was never yet affirmed, that *Prayer* was the *onely*, though indeed it was the *chief*, use of the *Temple*: Neither is there any reason, that either the one or the other, should jostle out its *Fellow*.

Who dare affirm there is not as true & real a need of *Preaching* in the *Church*, for Conversion to *Sincerity* and Edification, as in the *World* for Conversion to the *Profession* of Christianity? 'Tis evident, the *Prophets* of old preached nothing more, or more frequently, to the *Church* of the *Jews*, then *Conversion*; and under the same *term* too: and therefore, let none be so bold with Scripture as to call it *Canting*.

And let me *whisper* in your Ear, that *Preaching* hath the *preheminence* of *Writing*, and consequently of *reading* the Scriptures, both in point of *time* and manner of *Institution*: which may not be thought unworthy our consideration. We are sure *Preaching* is an Ordinance appointed *immediately* by Christ himself, what ever *Reading* is; and might possibly, though not so well have delivered the mind of God the *last two thousand* years to the World, as it did the *first*, though it had never been written. And notwithstanding the unspeakable advantage of the holy *Scriptures*, *Preaching* hath obtained in the *universal Church* to this day.

Who shall question whether *Preaching* (whereby we *address* to God, adoring him for his *mer-*

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cy and *truth*) in the Miniſtry of the *Prieſts* Lips be a part of *divine worſhip?* I am ſure the Injunctions of his *preſent Majeſty* makes it part of *divine Service.* With reference to Preaching alſo we have our *Ordination* and *Inſtitution*, and the *Laws* and *Canons* require it at our hands.

Why ſhould our Adverſaries triumph and ſay, we are againſt *Preaching?* and that we ſpeak againſt it to excuſe our *idleneſs* or inability? are not we beſt known by the name of *Preachers?* do they not by our *Preaching* ſee their moſt *need* of us? do they not hence raiſe their *value* and eſtimation for us? do what you can and ſpare not, to recover the honour due to the *Prieſthood* in *other* regards: But if all the reſt be loſt, I ſee no reaſon we ſhould hazard *this* alſo.

It is said the *Preachers* of our *Church* are *famous*, and have long been famous through the Christian World, for *Preaching*: Let *no man* take our *Crown*; let us not *throw it away* our selves.

Avoid Socinianism. and the suspition of it.

2. I perceive also *offence* hath been taken of the pretended *rational way* of some of our *Preachers* both in their *Preaching* and *Writing*: Though no sober man can doubt, but that it hath been of late, improved very excellently, for the baffling of *Popery* and the shaming of *Phanaticism*, out of the World.

But seeing the *Law* of Religion is twofold, *viz.* that of *Reason* and *Revelation*: *Phanaticism* seems to be twofold also. When men so adhere to *Revelation* as to despise *Reason*, or so to glory in *Reason*, as to neglect *Revelation*; onely with this difference, the

the first do *sine Ratione*, and the later *cum ratione insanire*; having the honour to run mad in the *Rational* way.

Me thinks it is safest so to use our *Reason* about *Religion*, as not to draw the suspition either of *Socinianisme* or *Infidelity*. Admit there were neither *Phanatick* (in ordinary sence) nor *Papist* in the World, what have we gained, if we have hazarded *Christianity*? neither can I bear with so general and accommodated an account of the *Christian Religion*. whatsoever its pretenses are, as a *Jew*, a *Turk*, or a *Pagan*, may subscribe.

We glory, and that justly, in the great Title of *Ministers* of the *Gospel*: and we are set for the *defense* of it. And what is the *Gospel* in strictness of Speech, but the *glad tidings* of *Salvation*

by *Faith*, in the *Redemption* of *Christ*, and the *Sanctification* of the *Holy Ghost*: And he that seems to despise these, is not more like to a *Socinian* then an *Infidel*, but more like either then a *Minister* of the *Gospel*.

Is not *Faith*, both in the *grace* and *profession* of it, a great part of the *Christian Religion*? or is there nothing in the *object* of the Christian Faith but what is *Reason* abstracted from *Revelation*? I am not altogether ignorant of the *learned* attempts this way, though to no great *purpose*. I know we cannot believe, and know not *why*; yet we use to say, that the *Arguments* inducing *Faith* are not taken from the nature of the *Object*, but from the *credibility* or infallibility of the *Author* or deliverer of it. And our *Faith*, in the *prime* Doctrines

ctrines of the *Gospel* is built, not upon them as *reasonable* in themselves, but upon *Testimony* from him that cannot deceive us.

According to our *Catechism* we say, we *believe* in God the *Father that made the World.* Now, if Reason could have found out certainly that the World was *made*; yet that it was made by the *Word of God*, or by the *Son of God*, or that things that *do now appear were made of things which did not*, i. e. that *all things* were made out of *nothing*; these things the Apostle, you know, referreth to *Faith*, as things never to have been discovered without *special Revelation.* Heb. 11. 1.

Much less that those other great *Articles*, touching the *Redemption* of Christ, and the *Sanctification* of the Holy Ghost; if you

you consider them in their *Evangelical Latitude*.

That the Second *Person* in the *Trinity* should assume the *humane Nature* into an *Hypostatical union* with it self; that *this* nature should be conceived by the *Holy Ghost*; *born of a pure Virgin*: That there is a *Messias*, and that this *is He*. That he died *for our sins*; that he rose *again for our justification*: That he *ascended* to Heaven and there sits on *the right hand of God*; and that thence he shall come *again to Judge the World*. All these are things, that *Reason* is an utter Stranger to. For *great is the Mystery of Godliness*, *God manifested in the Flesh*, &c.

Again, that there is a *third Person* in the *Deity*; that this is the *Holy Ghost*, that inspired the *Divine Writers*; and *confirmed* the

the Gospel by *Miracles*. That he is *sent down* from Heaven, to *convince the World*, to instruct and sanctifie, to govern guide and comfort the Church. These things we all stedfastly *believe* as Evangelical Verities, not discoverable by any *other Light*, then that of divine and special Revelation. I might add, that *Repentance* it self, though it be a very reasonable thing in those that have offended in order to pardon, &c. Yet, as it is a *grace* of this Spirit, and as it is a *condition* of the new Covenant, it is matter of *Faith*, and not to be discovered by *Reason* alone.

This is the *Word of Faith* that we ought to Preach, and profess; and thereby, give our *Testimony that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 14. In this, the *Apostles* and Primitive

mitive *Martyrs* were all *Confessors*. Search *Antiquity*, and you find all ancient *Offices* to have been compiled as it were for the same purpose. *Our Church* both in her *Doctrine* and *Worship*, is a great *Pillar* of Christianity, whereon little else is written but *Jesus Christ*. Review our *Catechisme* and *Collects*, *Hymns* and *Litany*, and several *Creeds*, as well as the *Offices* of the *Sacraments*; together with the *reason* and *end* of all our *Festivals*, and particularly of the *Lords day*; and you cannot but be confirm'd in the acknowledgment of our *great profession of the Gospel of Christ*.

Then let the World be *Infidel*, but we that are *Christians* and *Ministers* of Christ, let us joy in *believing*; and in our places own and profess the *Gospel*

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by Faith, which we cannot comprehend by *Reason*.

Let us hold fast the *Doctrine*, and keep close to the *worship*, and observe the *Festivals* of our own Church as the *true Sons* of it, and there can be no colour for any suspicion or imputation of *Socinianisme* upon us.

The sum is, notwithstanding the *private* opinions of some men, he must needs be very weak that shall fly from the *Church* of *England*, for fear of *Socinianism*: of which none can possibly doubt, that moreover read the *Canons*, made by the *Bishops* and the rest of our *Clergy* in the *Convocation* of 1640.

3. 'Tis further complain'd, that some of us speak too much in favour *of Popery*; saying, *they had rather be Papists then Phanaticks*, &c. these, though I have

Nor Popery. Reflec. p. 27.

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no mind to defend, yet 'tis evident, they intend onely either thus to Droll with *Phanaticks*, or to shew an implacable *averſneſs* to *Phanaticiſm*; which, they may ſuppoſe, they can hardly do in a higher Form of Speech, then that which prefers *Popery* it ſelf before it. Though, I think the excellent Dr. is not yet anſwered, who hath proved *Popery* to be founded in the groſſeſt ſort of *Phanaticiſm*.

However, *Compariſon*'s, eſpeciaily, where the *terms* are ſo oppoſite, muſt needs be offenſive and *odious*; yet, our Brethren ought to conſider, that ſuch ſuppoſed raſh expreſſions reflect nothing upon the *Church of England*; which, as it owneth not ſuch extravagancy in expreſſion, ſo it ſelf is owned by *them* that uſe them, as the

beſt

best Church in the World.

But, to my *Brethren* I make bold to say, that I know no *reason* they have to prefer *Popery* beyond some sort of *Non-conformity*: I am sure, 'tis neither *necessary* nor *seasonable*. The *Papists* may know to use your kindness beyond your intention; and you find the *Non-conformists* are scandaliz'd at our *very Church* for your sake; and *publickly* plead it against us already. And you cannot but remember the *late* horrid *consequences*, that the groundless *suspition* that our *Clergy* was *Popishly affected*, hath had upon us both in *Church* and *State*.

Yea, give me leave to say soberly, that some atleast of our *Non-conformists*, I hope, are not worse then *Papists* in their Principles about *civil Government*; and I hope

hope too their other principles of *Religion*, and their practises also, are nearer to us then the *Papists*. Neither need we look on *Non-conformity*, all things considered, as a more *formidable* Adversary: In my weak opinion, all that are not for *Popery*, have reason to *unite* against it.

But, whatever weakness *Non-Conformists* are guilty of in thinking otherwise, it is a truth, *that there is no Bulwork so impregnable against Popery*, as the Constitution of the *Church of England*: And none can read without some astonishment the incomparable *Zeal* of the *Convocation* (in 1640) to secure our Church both from *Popery* and *Socinianisme*.

Continue Loyalty: Lastly, let me conjure you not to be guilty of the least *whisper* against the *Government* of his Sa-

Sacred *Majesty*; but to do your duties *without murmuring*. You have hitherto had the honour of being styled the *Loyal Clergy*: 'Tis our true glory, that our *doctrine* establisheth *obedience* to *Princes* upon the best *Principles* in the World. Why should it be said, that the *Non-conformists are now the Royalists*, as an ingenuous Person (*J. H.*) intimates? Though I must have leave to remember him, that herein, as well as in some other things, he seems to take too much *liberty* to his *phansie*. As it is by *J. H.*

If the rest of his Brethren will stand to his Notion of the power of *Conscience*, and the power of the *Magistrate* touching it; I should desire to put it to no other issue, whether *their Principle* or *ours*, be the most *Loyal*.

His first Principles considered.

He saith, that unless the *matter* of the *Princes* command be *antecedently* necessary in the judgment of the *Subject* (it being commanded in Scripture, or required by the light of Nature for the common good) the *Conscience* of the Subject is not *obliged* to obey that command. Not being here aware, that obedience to *man* in things we judge *indifferent*, is both commanded by God in *Scripture*, and required also by God in the Law of *Nature* for the *common good*, i. e. for the security of the publick Peace, and Gods own Vicegerency upon the Earth.

As he saith him self, *p.* 74.

God saith particularly, *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake*; that is out of *Conscience* to God. *Obey them that have Rule over you*; give unto *Cæsar the things that are Cæsars*

rs. *You must needs be subject, not onely for wrath but Conscience sake.* These are expressed *absolutely*; but where do you find this *condition*, we need obey and submit onely for *wrath* & not out of *Conscience*, if the thing commanded be not otherways necessary, or but indifferent in *it self?* When *Man* commands what *God* forbids, 'tis reason we obey *God*, though with disobedience to *Man*; but when we may obey Man, and not disobey God, we must do it in obedience to God, that is out of *Conscience.*

The difference betwixt us is plainly this: We say, the *Conscience* becomes obliged to obey our *Prince* by virtue of *Gods command*, that we should obey him: You seem to say that Conscience becomes obliged from the *matter* or thing com-

manded, which quite destroyeth all obligation of *Conscience* to obey our *Prince*. For you say when a thing is commanded by God, or we think it tends to the publick good, then onely Conscience is obliged to obey our *Prince*: But this Obligation is onely from the necessity of the thing commanded; and because you approve it to be a duty *before*, and consequently in obedience to your own *Reason* and Judgment, and and not at all out of *Conscience* of the *command* or in obedience to the *King*; for you were in your *Logick* equally obliged to do it whether *Man* had commanded you or not.

But in all other Cases you need obey onely for *wraths* sake, that is, no further than you are *forced*: and therefore, when you are

re got above *fear*, you will not, r need not, regard *Authority*. This Principle will hardly prove he *Non-Conformists* the onely *Loyalists*.

But to make the matter a little *plainer*; let us consider what an oblige the *Conscience* but *God*, and the notice of his Will. Those things which are *indifferent* in themselves before, (as Bread and Wine) are therefore made *the necessary Elements* of the Lords Supper by Gods *command*, nd ought therefore to be used n *Conscience* to God. But if man ommand any thing, there are wo thing considerable; the *matter* or things commanded, and he *Authority* or command it self: f the thing commanded be uch, as God hath commanded *efore*; we are bound *in Conscience* to observe it two wayes;

from the neceſſity of the *matter*, and from the *Authority* of the command, which are both from God; for he that hath ſaid before *Do this*, hath alſo ſaid *Obey your Governours*.

But if the thing commanded by *man* were not commanded by *God before*, and be not forbidden any way by him, though the *firſt* way of obligation from the *matter* fails, yet the *ſecond* holds; and obligation from God to *obey our Governours* ſtill upon Conſcience, from the not ce of Go is will in that Caſe Beſid s, as was before obſerved in all uch indiff rent things *Go* requires *obedience* to our Gover nours, not only by his *poſitive* Laws in *Scripture*, as if ſuch obedience were indifferent before he required it; but alſo by the Laws of *Nature*, for the preſer-

servation of *Government* and the *publick* good.

Consider well that famous Case of the *Recabites*: They *abstained from Wine*, in obedience to their *Fathers* command after he was *dead*, and all fear of his *wrath* was gone: Now what could move or oblige them but *Conscience?* Conscience, I say; not that the *matter* was otherwise commanded by God, or was for the publick good, but in *honour* to their *dead Parent*, which God commanded: Therefore we find God *approves, accepts,* and *rewards* it. Which very thing proves it *was ultimately* and really an obedience to Gods *own Will*; for God *approves, accepts,* and *rewards* nothing else.

J. H.'s His second Principle.

But the foresaid *Author* pursues his discourse to a *Principle*, that seems to me of more *dange-*

P. 112, &c. *rous* consequences to *Government*. That *humane Powers may not lawfully command or inforce any thing against the Consciences*, or perswasions of the Consciences of the *Subject*, even in *civil concerns*. And for this instance he is very

P. 118. curous to say, that a *Tax* may be laid upon the *People*; yet if any one refuses to pay it, (as one of the *Fifth Monarchy*, he observes may possibly, in point of *Conscience*, do) though *distress may be taken* for the *publick good*, yet the person may not lawfully be *punished* for not paying it. And thus his matter runs *smoothly*; but if we may have leave to make choice of an *Instance*, I think he will desire no further answer in this particular. *E. G.* The *Law of God* is the Rule of *Conscience*: This Law is *Negative* as well as *Affirmative*, and binds

the

the *Conſcience equally* in both reſpects. So far we are agreed. Now admit a man of the *Fifth Monarchy*, or a number of ſuch men, ſhall think they are bound in *Conſcience* by virtue of ſome plain Text in the *Revelations* to *deſtroy* the *Wicked*, to ſet up the Government of *Jeſus Chriſt* in his *Saints*; and from that of the *Pſalmiſt* in order to this great work, to bind the *Kings of the Earth in Chains, and our Nobles in Fetters of Iron.* Seriouſly ſay, what think you of this Caſe? may not the *Sword* of the Magiſtrate be made a *terrour to ſuch evil Doers?* may not thoſe *bloody Conſciences* be reſtrained by commands and menaces? may not theſe bloody *hands* be cut off and puniſhed? may not Conſcientious *Murther* be revenged? no little Artifices of mans wit, no cunning

cunning Subterfugs of debauched *Consciences* can possibly race out that indeleble Law of Nature, and the God of Nature; *he that sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed.* And if the like colour from Conscience be put upon *Theft*, *Adultery* or any of the sins against our *Neighbour*, they may easily receive a like Answer. You will say perhaps these are *evil* by virtue of *Gods command*, before mans Law was made; true, so also 'tis a *good*, which God requires before the *Tax* be made, that we should give to every one his *due*, *Tribute* to whom *Tribute*, *Custom* to whom Custom. And I am apt to think, that what is given to *King Charles* by our selves in *Parliament*, is as due to him, as what was exacted by *Cæsars* command was to *Cæsar*.

I am afraid I shall trouble that Ingenious *Author*, otherwise I should mind him, that by such *Principles* the *Non-Conformists* are not likely to carry it in point of *Loyalty* or tendency to *Publick Good*, which draw both Religion, and Justice, and *properly* it self, under *such Authority* of *private Conscience*, as unhingeth *Government*: And to say no worse, leave all those *precious* things in an unestablished condition. But I spare them; for he many times seems to explain himself a great deal better then his *Principle* will bear him out: And sometimes, especially towards the latter end of his Book, when he had better considered the Consequences of it, he more then seems to *suspect* it, and resolves all into the *Prudence* of the *Governour*, no

no doubt finding his distinction of the Power of *restraint* and *constraint* would not serve him in all emergencies.

Let him consider; the *Law* of God obligeth us to *do*, as well as to *omit*: Accordingly *Conscience*, ruled by its apprehensions of that Law, obligeth us to *both*: Or whether it do so or no, it may be *perswaded* it doth, and that's all one: And though Conscience err, yet it is to us as *God*; and by obeying it we obey *God*, and it is above all *humane Authority*. Therefore the Magistrate hath no power to enforce me not to do my *apprehended* duty; or to *punish* me if I do it, though it be to *murther* the innocent, as in the Case before. He abhors the *consequence*, but whose are the *premises*?

Af-

After all this, and ſuppoſing ſome of us to be really guilty, either of *ignorance*, *ſcandal*, *idleneſs*, or *imprudence* in the aforeſaid particulars; I cannot be ſo fond as to believe, that this is the *chief* cauſe of the preſent *Separation*, whatever is pretended: my *Reaſon* is, becauſe it hath hitherto ſo happened (as a demonſtration to the *contrary*) that, where the *Diſſenters* themſelves acknowledge their *Pariſh Miniſters* freeſt from *ſuch* exceptions, (and all *other*) there is generally the greateſt cauſe to bewail *Separation*.

Conſequently I have no great encouragement, without a miracle, to beleive, that if you ſhould *reform* every thing that is *really* amiſs in you, or that they complain of, while you are *true* to the *duties* of your places, the

No hopes; yet do your duties.

Se-

Separation will much abate *upon* it.

However, you have other sufficient *Motives* to quicken you, & other *Persons* to account with: Therefore let the fear of *God*, and the good of the *Church* before you, and remove all *appearances* of *evil* from your selves, and all occasions of *evil speaking* from the *Dissenters*. And let nothing discourage you in your *Studies* and cares to *amend* what is amiss; to *persevere* in well doing, to *fulfil your Ministry*, and to receive your *Crown*: And if, notwithstanding your uttermost endeavours to prevent it, they will be *offended*, and forsake your Churches, bear it as your *Cross*, with the *patience* of Christians, and the *courage* of the *men of God*. And however they treat you, or the *Church*, cease not to pity and

Pray for your Enemies.

and *pray* for them, as you are taught. Pray for them, though your *Enemies*: Though they ſlander you and *perſecute* you, and for nothing elſe but the truth's ſake, as they did the *Apoſtle*: *That it may pleaſe thee to forgive our Enemies, Perſecutors, and Slanderers, and turn their Hearts.* Pray for them as *Sheep* that are gone aſtray; that *it may pleaſe thee to bring into the way of truth ſuch as have erred and are deceived. We beſeech thee to hear us good Lord.*

Now, my Brethren, I humbly and earneſtly beſeech you to *pardon* my freedome with you. Onely take it by the *right handle*, and I know you cannot take it amiſs. Seeing 'tis ſaid I have dealt *ſmartly* with our *Adverſaries*, if I ſhould not deal *plainly* with you, I ſhould

ſhould neither follow my *Example*, nor anſwer my *Reprover*.

But I have a word or two alſo *ad populum*, for our *Conforming* People, that yet continue in one Parochial Communion.

Advice

Advice to our Conforming People.

WILL *you also go away?* you know *we have the words of eternal life*: and whether can you go to mend your selves? Consider the danger of breaking the *Union*, and dissolving the constitution of our *Parish Churches*; and *hold fast* the *profession of your Faith, without wavering*, nor *forsaking the assembling your selves together, as the manner of some is.* Hold fast.

Your continuing *hitherto* with us, declares you are *satisfied* with our Communion: And for your *Parish Ministers*, if they are such as they should be, fail not to encourage them in

the day of their distress, as *Children* should do to *their Parents*: If they are faulty, endeavour in your places to *reform* or *remove* them if incorrigible, that the Church may be no longer *scandalized* by them; but be very tender of *Separating* from them.

Be your *Ministers* never so obnoxious, your *Separation* is no *legal Remedy* either for the Church or you; nor do our Laws allow it: Yea, you have not a word from the old *Non-Conformists* or *Presbyterians* to warrant your going to *separate* Congregations of *another* constitution; though indeed they did allow of going to Neighbour-*Parishes*, where the Minister was very *ignorant* or *wicked*. But if the Minister be pious and diligent, though of very

ordinary

ordinary and mean gifts, they do by no means allow an *Ordinary*, and usual with drawing from his Ministry, to hear those that are *more able*.

Are the *People* that separate of *better Lives* then you? the fault is not in the *Ministry*, by which *they* were also generally *converted*, but in your *selves*: *I speak this to your shame*. It is *left* to you, to recover the honour of that *means* which *they* disparage by *forsaking*, and *you* by *prophaning*.

Yet it is sufficiently observable, that the *Separation* it self is blemish't with its *peculiar* Vices; which you ought by *oppositions* to avoid.

Are they *proud*, censorious, jealous, and *rash in* Judgement; be ye humble, candid, and *charitable*: Are they *partial* and trou- Vices of the Separation.

ſome to the *Church* and *Neigh-*
bourhood, be ye *Catholick*, and as
much as in you lies live *peaceably*
with them and all men. Are
they guilty of *Schiſm* by breach
of *unity?* take you heed of be-
ing ſo by breach of *Charity*.
And by their new and ſtrange
devices to *deride*, ſtudy how
you may *unite*. And ſeeing
they will forſake you, ſtudy you
to keep *cloſer* one to another.

Their good imitate.

Yet, what is or ſeems to be
good and commendable in them,
if *there be any virtue*, if *there be*
any praiſe among them, *think on*
theſe things; and diſdain not to
be *taught* by your *Adverſaries*.
Are they *Zealous* in their way?
do they love and adhere to and
provide one for another? are
they *ſtrict* and temperate? Are
they free from Vanity, Ribaldry,
Riot, and Blaſphemy? Are they

Admi-

Admirers of their *Teachers*. Punctual and greedy observers of the *times* of their worship, &c. Be you so too, and much more; and covet *earnestly the best gifts*. Thus labouring to redeem the *Name* and *Reputation* of the *Church of England*, from the charge of a *vain* and debauch't *Conversation*, under so excellent a *Profession*.

A PETITION AND ADVICE TO THE NON-CONFORMISTS.

Preachers. 1. TO their *Preachers*, if they would design to hear me with patience and charity, and *meekness of wisdom*, and not count me an *Enemy*, who would onely tell them the *truth in love*.

Many of you are well known to me; I should wrong you, not to acknowledg you to be men of *Parts*

Parts and *worth*, and such as are qualified to *serve* the Church in a more then ordinary manner; and I know not that I ever said any thing, when *warmest* in Argument, undeserving that Charity of *F. H.* concering me: *who* (saith he) *upon Conviction, will perhaps as soon as any, be ready to thank God with us, if a Door so effectual be opened, that we may without offence, and without Schism, joyn our strength in mutual love and concord for the carrying on the great work of mans Salvation through the Nation.*

Yet I have said so much *against* you, that you will not easily believe I would *flatter* you: 'Tis enough, if you can bear with me, that I am not yet convinced, but that the course you have taken is *sinful*, and of dangerous *consequence*; from which

very perſwaſion onely, I too all that *heat* that ſome complai of.

I am yet offended at your *Se paration*, but eſpecially that yo gather your *Aſſemblies* at th ſame time with the *Temple-Wor ſhip*; and in ſuch *Places* too where no exception lies againſ the *Pariſh-Miniſters*: Beyond al colour or pretence of Reaſon and all *Allowance* even of thoſe that have hitherto Written in your *defence*. And methinks (ſuffer my *plainneſs*) if there be indeed any *Wiſdom*, and *Meekneſs* in you; if any love to to *us*; if any care to the *Church*; if any real deſire to avoid the Crime and the charge of *Schiſm*; it ſhould be difficult to perſwade you to alter your practice in that one particular.

You

You do not think the People would be the *worse* for our Fellowship. You do not bid *Defiance* to it your selves; or declare against the *Parish-Constitution* of our Churches, or for a *Total Separation*: If any thing of this nature be said of you, you are *offended:* Then think on't seriously, why you should generally so order your *Meetings*, as that your *Hearers* are *necessitated* to leave our Assemblies. Keep your Meetings at other times.

If I may not deserve to be heard, *Whom* will ye hearken to in this Point? Shall we appeal to those that would *defend* you, and Write against me? I am content; follow but their *Advice* and *Examples* in this particular, and you will oblige me never to trouble you more in this Matter. Follow your Friends advice.

Here

P. 90, 91, &c. Hear what the *Authour of Sacrilegious Dissention*, &c. saith: *If you live where the Conformable Minister is faithful, truly endeavouring the Salvation of his Flock; I charge you in the name of Christ, do not onely if possible as much as in you lieth, live in love, familiarity, peace with him; but also do all that you can to maintain his honour, and promote his work. For all your Non-Conformity, you are no better then* he, if you be not more *charitable* then he. *If you set your selves in a dividing way, secretly to rejoyce at his disparagement, and to draw as many from him as you can, you are but destroyers of the Church of God. Call your selves what you will, I will call you destroyers if you are dividers.*

Yea, much that else would be your duty, must be omitted to avoid Division. The work of God, the good of Souls, the defense of the Protestant

tant Religion against Papists, require your utmost conjured strength: And you are Betrayers of all these, if you are Dividers.

Therefore go as often as you can to his Congregation; and hold communion personally with him, and lead the People with you. Do not say now we have an opportunity to do better, it is unlawful to joyn with them that do worse: For though it be not lawful to neglect your own duty and opportunity, it is lawful for you by deed as well as word to shew your Christian Concord and Communion.

Therefore in Parishes where all may well hear the Parish Minister, I would not have you, without necessity Preach at the same hour as he doth, but at some middle time, that you may not seem to vie with him for Auditors, nor to draw the People from him: But let them go with you to hear him, and after come and hear you, or before. And

And that he likes not this *gathering of Churches* very well, whatever he had said in their *defense*, by the *Petition* he would have *us* make for them: *That if possible* (upon the terms he had laid down) *they might be taken into the established Ministry*; *if not, yet tolerated as Lecturers under us in such Churches where the Ministers desire* them. And he hath my consent, that either of these were *rather* to be admitted, though it be with the *loss* of part of our *profits*, then to hazard *all*, as I fear you do, by the present *separation*.

One thing, I humbly renew for your most serious consideration; whether it be not adviseable to instruct your *Hearers*, in the lawfulness and *convenience* of their communicating *with us*, at least sometimes; and

and perſwading them thereunto both by your *teachi g* and *example*; leſt by the conſtant *oppoſite practice*, their hearts be ſo *alienated* from the *Temple-worſhip*, that when you would reduce them to it, you ſhall find it beyond your power.

Advice

To the Non-Conforming People

FOr you that are our *People*, who are neither gone away *already*, or are under temptation to *leave us*, I have very little encouragement to trouble you with my advice; though I shall not say of *you*, as the *Author* lately quoted doth of the *Conformists* in his *humble Petition* to them, *that Satan hath got so great advantage, that the wisest man living is uncapable of speaking rightly to them without offence.*

P. 118.

However suffer, though it be a kind of *penance* to you, yet suffer a word or two of *Exhortation*, which I shall commend with

with better *Authority* to you, then mine own.

1. Suffer the Arguments both from *duty* and *Peace*, and *unity* and *charity*, to prevail with you, to conform as *far as you can*. And in what you cannot, labour for *satisfaction*, and if that cannot be had, use any *allowed* means for the gratifying your selves in *such things* wherein you *cannot* conform; but do not *separate more then you must needs*; Is not this *reasonable* and *proper* advice? ask Mr. *Baxter*? ask the *Author* of the Answer to my Book? ask the old *Non-Conformists*; yea I appeal to your *own Breasts*, if you would but suffer your selves seriously and impartially to consider it: For surely *Division* is not to be chosen *for it self*; and there can be no reason for the use of the dangerous

Conform as far as you can.

gerous *Physick* of Separation, and rending and tearing the *body* of the Church, beyond *necessity*.

There are three Questions or *Cases* of Conscience, that would be *throughly* canvas'd and resolv'd before you *Separate*.

1. Whether we may *ordinarily leave our own Parish Ministers* to *hear others?*

2. *Whether such as could and did communicate with the Parish Churches before the liberty, can have any tolerable reason to separate now.*

3. *Whether such as say they cannot in Conscience joine with us in all things, have any ground to leave us in those Parts of worship they can.*

The first is answered by the *Old Non-Conformists*; particularly by the grave Mr. *Hildersham*, in these words:

If

'If thy *Pastor*, saith he, be 'approved of by the Church *Con-* 'scionable in his *place*, *unblameable* 'in his life; though of *inferiour* 'Parts, take heed thou leave 'him not.

'1. He may be a true *Mini-* 'ster though *inferiour* to many 'others, *Mat.* 25. 15. Which 'Argument the Apostle useth to 'perswade *all* members to *unity*, 'Eph. 4. 7.

'You are bound to love and 'reverence him, and thank God 'for him, 1 *Cor.* 16. 10. 1 *Thes.* 5. 13. *Rom.* 10. 15. *Luke* 10. 16.

'3. Doubtless thou maist *profit* by him, if the fault be not *in thy self*, 1 Cor. 12. 7. & 14. 31.

'4. Our *profit* depends not on Ministers *gifts*, but on Gods *blessing*, 1 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 7, 8.

'5. None may usually and 'ordinarily leave his own *Pastour*, '(so qualified as before) for: 1. 'As it is Gods own *Ordinance*, 'that every own *Pastour* should 'have his own *Flock* to attend, 'and take heed unto, *Act.* 14. '23. So it is Gods *Ordinance*, that 'every one of Gods People 'should have a *Pastor* of his own 'to attend upon, 1 *Pet.* 5.3. Now 'he cannot be said to depend up-'on his *Pastour's* Ministry, that 'doth *ordinarily* and usually 'leave it, and go to another. 'He onely maketh a *right* use 'of the *benefit* of *hearing* such as 'have more *excellent* gifts then 'his own *Pastour*, as leaneth 'thereby to his own *Pastour* the 'better, and to *profit more* by 'him.

'6. If thou leavest thine own 'Pastour onely with a desire to e-

di-

'*dise* thy self. 1. Do it with *his* '*consent* and leave. 2. Acknow-'ledge thou owest a *duty* to him 'as to thy *Superiour* in the 'things that belong to thy '*Soul*, 1. Thes. 5. 11. 3. Thou 'art bound to seek his *comfort*, 'and to give him all good en-'couragement, that he may do 'his work with *joy* and cheerful-'ness, *Heb.* 13. 17. *Hilderſham* 'upon the 4*th.* of *John.*

2. The Second Case is touch-ng *such of you as could and did ommunicate with us in our Pariſh orſhip, before the liberty granted y the late Declaration*: And is, hether they can have any *tolera-le Reaſon* (except their Judge-ents be since changed) to *ſepa-ate now*. That they cannot, I ope I have made to appear ſuf-ciently in other parts; but if *y Reaſons* may not be thought

worthy your Consideration; yet, me-thinks 'tis not inconsiderable, that there are but *two* Persons that have set themselves to *answer* me; and they have both of them yielded *in this point*. Though they seem to be a little *too* exceptious in lesser matters.

The *Author* of the Book called *Sacrilegious desertion of the holy Ministry rebuked*, &c. deliver-eth himself in the Case fully to our purpose in these words.

P. 76. 'As far as I can promise, 'saith he, we will judge of you 'no worse then *we have done*, not 'deny any Communion with 'you which we *have* used, and '*can* use, without neglecting our 'own work. As I constantly 'Joyn in my *Parish Church* in *Li-turgy* and *Sacraments*, so I hope 'to do *while I live*, (if I live un-'der as honest a Minister) at due 'times. The

The Author of the *short Reflections* upon *Toleration not to be abused*, is my other *publick Adversary*; let us hear him also. P. 37.

'Who are they, saith he, who 'separate from them where 'they *can have Communion* with 'them, I do not know. (I wish 'we could say so too.) Presbyterians I believe will not scruple 'to hear all Ministers amongst 'them to Preach (as they have 'occasion) nor possibly some-'to hear them read. COMMON 'PRAYER, but will be ready 'to go with him *as far as they* 'can.

And thus also you have *their* opinion as to the last Case, viz. *Whether such as say they cannot in Conscience joyn with us in all things, have any ground to leave us in those parts of worship wherein they can?* You have heard both

these *Authors*, when they purposely set themselves to speak to these very points, to intimate their Confession for the *Negative*. Upon this very ground *Ames* seems to affirm, there may be no *total Separation* from a true Church, but onely *partial*, *quatenus Communio non potest absq; peccato exerceri*, so far as we may not communicate without sin.

What man can think it reasonable, that such as live within the *bounds* of any true particular *Church*, should for *some offences* renounce *all Communion* with it? or, as I said at first, divide and *separate more then needs?* When once you can weigh the evil of *division*, and value *Peace* in the Church, and *union* amongst Brethren truly as you ought; you will be then of the same mind with with us. O let no prejudice or

p..r-

partial respect of *things* or *persons*, any longer captivate your minds in *Errour*, leading to a *practice* so dangerous in its *consequence* as I have shewn; and so unreasonable in its *Principles*, as your stoutest *Friends*, in the *Field* of controversie would not dare to defend. Yea, whose very *Professions* and personal *Practices* are for the contrary, and would teach you better.

My *first* Answerer hath many other very good *Directions* both to *you* and your *Teachers*, for which I thank him; and which I earnestly desire you to consider and *follow*.

Remarques upon the late Reflections on Toleration not to be abused.

THese *shore Reflections* might have been much *shorter*, and none of the Authors *Reason* been lost: *Some* of them might have been spared, for that they *reflect* upon the *Author* himself, *viz.* such as *these*: *Blessed God! when will the lust of implacable men be satisfied upon their Brethren!* p. 5. *the Author seems to be incredibly serious*, p. 6. *Doth it not seem ridiculous to you?* p. 12. *'Tis both malitious and nonsensical imputation.* p. 22. *They may it seems tolerate any thing, but his Majesty may not,*

p.

p. 25. *as to the fear of Popery, I wish he and his Friends were in earnest*, p. 27. *'Tis well known most of the Conformists are* Arminians, p. 28. *If he had favour'd me with his Notion of a true particular Church*, &c. but *this was not for Interest*, p. 29.

These, and such kind of *Reflections*, seem not to be worthy of a *pure light*; that so lately came out of great *darkness* and *tribulation*; as he every where complains: But *this kind* of Reflections I have no mind to *answer*.

I have indeed made *reply* to *all* the other parts of his Book: But, upon *Second* thoughts have yet resolved to *publish* onely so much of it, as concerns the Argument, so far as it is *New*; and not so fully considered as, perhaps, might be desired, in my

Reply

Reply to my other *Answerer.*

Title page. The very *Question* almost in his own words is this: *Whether it be not a sinful Separation, and contrary to the Principles of the late Presbyterians, to gather themselves into Congregations distinct and separate from the parochial Assemblies, under present Circumstances.* Thus I affirm, and he denieth.

The *Sum* of that which he offereth against it, is reduceable to these *two Propositions*: 1. We hold the *Church* of *Rome* to be a *true Church*, and yet *Separate* from it. 2. Our *Parochial* are not *true* Churches; or at least they are so *faulty*, as they may lawfully be *separated* from.

The *first* of these is much insisted on by my *other* Adversary, to whom I have *answered* in another place: we find it *twice*, at

at leaſt in theſe *Reflections*, p. 17. by the ſame Weapon, ſaith he, *by which our Brethren defend their Separation from* Rome, *we defend our Seceſſion in ſome Ordinances from them.* But how you ſhall defend your Seceſſion *in all Ordinances* would alſo be conſidered. But more briskly to the ſame purpoſe, *p.* 23. he queries thus; *Have not our Brethren Separated from the Church of* Rome; *yet many of them do own the Church of* Rome *as a true Church? When they have reconciled themſelves to to theſe aſſertions of their own, they will be able to ſee what anſwer we may give them alſo. If they may ſeparate from a Church which they own as true, then ſurely we may do ſo too.*

But hereunto I anſwer.

1. When I affirmed that it was *unlawful to gather a Church out of a true*

true Church (which was the ground of his *Reflection*,) I did *perſonate* and ſpake the *propoſition* of the *late Presbyterians*. And you do not ſay, the Presbyterians hold the Church of *Rome* to be a *true* Church: So that as to them, the Argument may be ſtill valid enough. And thoſe of us, that you ſay hold the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, may have, and indeed have, *other Arguments* to condemn your Separation.

2. You know that was a current Argument of the *late Presbyterians* againſt the *Independents*; and I uſed it as *theirs*: And if it be *inconſequent*, charge *them* with bad Logick, and *ſay they* were miſtaken, not I.

3. 'Tis moſt certain, this is no good Logick with the *old Presbyterians*: We may ſeparate from the Church

Church of *Rome*, therefore from the *Church of England*. And when they urge their Adversaries with the *unlawfulness* of gathering Churches out of true Churches, they supposed they spake to Persons that understood what *true Churches* they meant, *viz.* Our *Parochial* Congregations. And that out of *such* true Churches as ours are, where we have *the Word and Sacraments truly* dispensed, and we may communicate without sin, it is not lawful to separate and gather Churches.

4. It is not enough for you to say our Communion is so *corrupt*, as you cannot communicate in it; we *prove* that the Communion of the *Roman Church* is such. Upon this ground the *Brownists*, the *Quaker*, the vilest Separatist and Heretick is armed; and may as well say, you separate from *Rome*, that you take to be a true Church;

Church; therefore we may separate from *you*, whether ye be so or not.

5. For the *Fathers* of the *Church* of *England*, many of them do indeed hold the Church of *Rome* to be *verè* a Church of Christ; yet generally they say she is not *vera Ecclesia*: she is truly a Church as to the *Essence*, but not *morally a true Church*, having neither the *Word truly Preached*, *nor the Sacraments rightly administred in it*; which *Calvin* makes Essential to a *true Church*. I dare undertake to make it evident, when he shall *vouchsafe to name those principal Fathers*, whom now he is forsooth *unwilling* to name; (for what Reason I know not) I dare undertake, I say, to make it evident, that they meant no other *thing*, though they may take the

the *Liberty* of their own *words*.

6. The *sum* is; the *Presbyterians* hold the Church of *Rome* to be a *false* Church; and say, you may not gather a Church out of a *true* Church. The *Episcopal* Divines say, that the Church of *Rome* is *truely* a Church, but not *true* as a Church should be, but *false* and corrupt both in her *Doctrine* and *Worship*; so as none can lawfully *joyn* with her: And yet the Church of *England*, is both *truly* a Church and a a *true* Church; where the *Word of God is truly taught, whose Doctrine the very Non-Conformists approve of*; & in whose worship, many of them say, we may joyn *without sin*; where the *Sacraments* are also *rightly* administred: And therefore, without all further controversie they may hold that it is *lawful* to *separate* from the Church

Church of *Rome*, but *sinful* to separate from the Church of *England*; and yet not be able to see what *Answer* you may give them.

7. Besides, *lastly*, you may easily know, that our eminent *Fathers* say; that, if we are *in Schism* from *Rome*, the *Papists* themselves were guilty of it in *Henry* the 8*th*. yea, that we did not, do not *separate* from the Church of *Rome*, for we *really* were never of that Church: We never did *owe* any *Communion* to to that Church: That, under the encouragement of *own Government*, and by the authority thereof, we onely *reformed our* selves, without separating from *Rome*, or any other Church. And if so, as in truth it is, much good may your *Consequence* do you.

8. But

8. But he also intimates a *Reflection* upon *our Churches*: He doth not indeed speak *out*; but he speaks as if our *Parochial Assemblies*, were either no *true Churches*, or *such* as we may lawfully *Separate* from. Hear him *p.* 15. where he *first concedes fairly*; *We do believe*, saith he, *that from a Church, a number of Christians that have consented to a Pastor that is able and faithful, and regularly administers the Ordinances of Christ, so as a People may communicate without sin; and pressing forward towards perfection in order, Christians may not separate without sin.*

And this is *that* indeed, saith he, *which some Presbyterians reflected upon our Brethren of the Congregational way for: And these were those Parochial Churches, which they contended for as true Churches.*

And now the *bottom* is out, and his *Fallicy* is apparent in his *foisting* (I would use an *easier* word if I could) his foisting in *new* and strange *matter* into the *nature* of a *true Church*; and then fathering it upon the *Presbyterians*; when 'tis purely *Independent*, *Brownistical*, or his *own*.

For, if there be any *consequence* in what he hath said, 'tis this: A Church where the *Pastor* is duly qualified, and the People *consent* to him; and both *press forward* towards perfection in *order*; you may not *separate* from: But if the *Pastor* be not in all points well qualified, or if the People do not *approve* of him, or if they do not press forward towards *perfection* in *order*, one may *separate* from *such* a Church, and the *last Presbyterians* said nothing to the contrary.

But, suppose the *Pastor* be *faulty* in some particulars of his *life*, if he regularly administers in his *Office*; or suppose, he be a *good man*, and a diligent *Minister*, and be set over a People by the *Laws* of our own Church, but the *People* do not *like* him; will you say, this is no *true Church* for *these Reasons?* If you are a *Presbyterian*, you dare not. May one *separate* from such a Church for these Reasons? or for these Reasons may you betake your self to a Church of *another Constitution?* was ever *this* the *opinion* of the *old Non-Conformists* or *late Presbyterians?* Say it not for shame.

But the weight is behind, in the last *condition*: *Pressing forward towards Perfection in order. These were the Parochial Churches, where this excellency was found;*

which the late Presbyterians contended for as true Churches. Thus he would draw his *Presbyterian* Brethren to own that which is contrary to their expreſs ſenſe and words; for they did *ex profeſſo* diſpute, that *order* and diſcipline was not eſſential to a true Church; and onely for the want of it none might ſeparate.

In earneſt: Suppoſe a Church thinks *her Order*, as to the *Government*, is as perfect as ſhe can, or need to have it: And ſhe deſires that the *Execution* were better, but cannot have it ſo. Yea, ſuppoſe a Church *too careleſs* in this matter, whether it be well or no; will you, or any *Presbyterian* ſay, it is therefore no *true Church*, or we may therefore ſeparate from it? Was not *this* the Caſe of the Church of *Corinth*? Doth the *Apoſtle* ad-

adviſe or allow any *Separation* in this caſe? Though their *Doctrine* alſo was more corrupt then *Arminianiſm* that ſo much offends you, and their *Communion* debauched even with *Intemperance* and Luxury.

Beſides, whatever unjuſt and unconſcionable clamours we labour under, we are ready to maintain, that our *Miniſters, generally*, are of holy and unblameable *Lives*; and do faithfully, and regularly adminiſter both the *Word and Sacraments*; and that our *People generally* do, or very lately did, ſubmit to their *Parochial Miniſters*, and really own them as *their Guides*, by their attendance upon the worſhip of God in our *Temples*; and thoſe *few* that did not, I hope I have ſufficiently proved that *they ought* to have done it.

And now I shall venture to *appeal* to the *Conscience* of my *Reflecter* himself, whether so *general* and *total* a defection and decession from a *true Church* (as he seemeth to acknowledge *some* of ours to be; and if any, sure they are such as they *separate from*) would have been judged *other* then *Schismatical* by the *Apostles* themselves, or by the *Fathers*, or by the *reformed Churches* beyond Sea, or by our own ancient *Non-Conformists*, if no other Reason could be alledged for it, but what he hath here urged? As for the *late Presbyterians*, indeed it is the very *question*, what *they* thought of this point; and whether it be lawful, in *their Judgment* for such *Reasons* as he hath brought us, to separate, and to gather our People into *new Churches*, will better appear

pear from their *own* words, for they can yet speak *for themselves*, and you will find they do it fully in the following *Dialogue*.

What the *Reflection* means by putting [*A Subjection in all the Ordinances of the Gospel to the Lord Jesus Christ*] into the *definition* of the Church, I cannot certainly divine; but if it signifie any thing more then the *received Definitions* of a true Church, it signifies *nothing* but an *Engine* of *Divisions*. The *Presbyterians* perhaps will have it in, to serve his *Ruling Elder*: The *Independent*, to keep out all *Forein Jurisdiction*, and keep himself exempt from all power without the bounds of a *particular Church*: The *Anabaptist*, for the *necessity of Baptizing*, as *necessary* to a *true Church*. And thus it becomes an *Instrument* fit- P. 14.

ted for the *mutual damning* one another.

Whereas, if the difinition of *Calvin* and reformed Divines keep its authority (*viz.* that *where the Word of God is truly preach'd, and the Sacraments rightly administred, there is a true Church*) Mr. *Baxter* hath room enough for his *large Charity*, to think they are *all true* Churches, though *Schismatical*: That is, though they are made up of *Sheep gone astray* from their *proper Folds*; to which they yet *owe themselves*, and ought to return.

A

Dialogue

BETWIXT THE

INDEPENDENT AND PRESBYTERIAN

About gathering of

CHURCHES;

Taken out of a Book called, the *Grand Debate*, and *Papers* therein Printed, as they were given in to the *Committy* of Lords and Commons, and Assembly of Divines, with the Commissioners of *Scotland* for Acommodation 1644. Printed in 1648.

LONDON:

Printed for *James Collins*, at the Kings Arms in *Ludgate-street*, 1673.

TO THE Reader.

Good Reader,

PErhaps thou mayest censure me too severe with my Answerers, in exppoſing this old difference to a publick review: but why then did they give me so great an advantage, and provoke me to take it in my own defense? Why did they Scandalize the World, and many of their own Friends too, who are yet living Witnesses of that so notorious a contest? by mincing the matter & seeming shy to acknowledge that the then Presbyterians were against gathering new Churches out of the Parochial? To say nothing of their opinion of Toleration: For what Toleration, as to our

our purpose, *could they, that were Presbyterians, be thought to indulge, who so stifly refused to allow it to their* Independent *Brethren, particularly in the very point of* gathering Churches.

In this following Dialogue *you have no feigned* disguise *on either side; but both speaking* over again *their own* Sense, *and* Reason, *and* words *throughout, almost* verbatim, *as they were given in by* themselves *to the* Committee *of the long* Parliament, *as appears in the second part of the* grand Debate, *published by Persons intrusted by both* Parties.

By way of Introduction: *You need not be remembred that the* Presbyterians *were earnest for an* establishment *with* Uniformity, *and did declare that the Members of* particular *Congregations do* cohabit *and live together, with-*

within certain bounds *and Precincts of a Parish*, p. 6. n. 9. *The* Independents, *not well satisfied, moved for an* Indulgence, *and the Dialogue may be supposed to begin thus.*

A DIALOGUE

Betwixt the

INDEPENDENT AND PRESBYTERIAN,

Taken out of

Papers given to the Committee of Lords and Commons, and Assembly of Divines, with the Commissioners of *Scotland* for Accomodations, 1644. Printed, 1648.

Indep. WE are not against your *Rule*, and the establishment you desire; onely we cannot in *Conscience* be so confined: And therefore we desire *liberty* to worship God in our own way *by our selves.*

Presb.

Presb. We are not altogether against an *Indulgence*; but we would have none allowed the *benefit* of it, but such as agree with us as to the substance of their *Faith* and *Worship*.

Indep. Therefore you cannot deny it to *us*, who *thus* agree with you.

Presb. 1. But your desire plainly holds out a *total separation*: As if our Churches were not to be communicated with *in any thing* which should argue *Church-Communion*: and more could not be said or done against *false Churches*.

2. It also plainly holds out the lawfulness of *gathering Churches* out of true Churches; yea (they add, by way of aggravation the cause of our *Reflecters* mistake) such *true Churches* as endeavour further to *reform*: Wherof we are

are assured, there is not the least hint of an *Example* in the *Word* of God.

3. This *liberty* would pull down what the *Parliament* would set up, and would give you a *greater* priviledge then we enjoy, who are under the Rule *of establishment.*

4. This would give countenance to a *perpetual Schism* and Division in the Church; still drawing away from the Churches under the *Rule*, &c. and introduce all manner of confusion in *Families*, where the Members are of several Churches.

Indep. What *liberty* then are you contented to allow us, that differ from you almost in nothing but *matters of Government.*

Presb. None may be allowed, upon differences onely in *matter of Government*, to withdraw Communion

munion from us in things wherein they declare an *agreement*. — There may be no such indulgence granted to any, as may constitute them in *distinct Congregations*, as *to those parts of* worship where they can *joyn* in Communion with us. Onely some expedient may be found to *bear* with them in the particulars wherein they *cannot agree* with us.

Indep. What expedient?

Presb. Such as through *scruple* or error of *Conscience* cannot joyn to partake of the *Lords Supper*, shall repair to the *Minister* and Elders for *satisfaction* in their *Scruples*, which if they cannot receive, they shall not be compelled to *communicate*. Provided that in all other parts of worship they joyn with the Congregation, in which they live,

and be under the Government of that Congregation. So far you have in *p.* 18, 19, 20, &c.

Indep. If this be *all*, we must be plain with you; We can't joyn with you *without sin*: We would not live *without Ordinances*: And for the enjoyment of them, for for our *edification*, we would joyn in *another* Congregation.

Yet so as not *condemning* those Churches we joyn not with, as false; but still preserving all *Christian Communion* with the *Saints* of the same body of the *Church Catholick*, and joyn with them in all duties of worship, that belong to particular Churches, *so far as we are able*: If this be called *Schisme*, or the countenance of Schism, it is more than we have yet learned, *p.* 36.

Is

Is not this a very fair Plea? It was once Independency. And the Presbyterians then answer'd to it in every particular.

Indep. We cannot *without sin* to us, enjoy all the Ordinances of Christ, and partake of all duties of worship *as Members* of that Congregation *where our dwelling is*: And what would you have us do?

Presb. If you cannot in *all*, yet partake in *as many* duties and ordinances as you can: And let the *Indulgence* onely *supply* that, wherein you *cannot*; and not exempt you universally in that wherein you *can*.

But we desire you would speak freely and candidly: Can you enjoy *any one* Ordinance in our Congregation *as Members*? We should be glad to hear from you, that you can be *Members* of that

Congregation where *your dwelling is* p. 70.

Indep. But you know we cannot live *without Ordinances* for our edification: Therefore for our ſpiritual good, we may lawfully joyn in *another Congregation.*

Presb. 1. This will not follow upon your own *Conceſſion*: For you confeſs you can *occaſionally* joyn with us without ſin; and why not *conſtantly*?

2. Your Conſcience may *erre*: And the Church is no way bound to *indulge* a liberty then, eſpecially to the evident *diſturbance* of her own peace.

3. Whatever *indulgence* is granted, let this be the *boundary* of it, which is given by our Brethren themſelves, *viz.* that ſuch as give no *Teſtimony* of their *Godlineſs* and *Peaceableneſs*; ſuch as have

have not used *all means* in faithfulness to know the mind of Christ; such as do condemn those Churches which they joyn not with, *as false*; as do not preserve all *Christian Communion* with the Saints; nor joyn with them in all duties of worship so far as they are able, shall not have the benefit of this indulgence.

And to the end that these words [so far as they are able] may not stand for a meer *Cypher*, and signifie nothing; let each man particularly declare in what ordinances he is *able* to joyn: that so all total Separation may be prevented, *p.* 70.

Indep. Though we shall not joyn with, we will not *condemn* your Churches as *false*: And this no *rigid Separation*, p. 71.

Presb. The *condemning* our *Churches as false*, doth *little extenuate*

nuate the Separation: For divers of the *Brownists* who have *totally* separated in former times, have not condemned these Churches as false.

Though you do not pronounce an *affirmative* judgement against us; your very *separating* is a *tacit* and practical *condemning* of our Churches; if not as *false*, yet as *impure*; *eousque* as that in such Admistrations they cannot be by you, as Members communicated with, *without sin*.

Indep. However though we cannot communicate with you as Members of your *particular* Congregations, yet we will preserve all *Christian Communion* with you as Saints and Members of the *Catholick* Church.

Presb. This is as full a declining Communion with us as *Churches*, as if we were *false* Churches, *p.* 72. *Indep.*

Indep. If this be called *Schism*, or the countenance of Schism, it is more then we have yet learned, either from the *Scripture* or any approved *Author*, p. 73.

Presb. It gives manifest countenance to *perpetual Schism*, should this be allowed you. Not that we think differences in *Judgment* in this or that point to be *Schism*, or that every *Inconformity* unto every thing is *Schism*, so as *Communion* be preserved: Or that Separation from *Idolatrous* Communion *ex se* unlawful is *Schism*; but

1. We find that you desire not onely that you may be free from communicating *as Members* in those *Parishes* where you dwell, but also that you may have *liberty* to have Congregations of such persons, who out of *tenderness* of *Conscience* cannot communi-

cate with us, but do *voluntarily* offer themselves to joyn in *separate* Congregations of *another Communion*. Which Secession of our Members from us is a manifest *rupture* of our Societies into other, and is therefore a *Schism in the body*.

And if the *Apostle* doth call those *Divisions* of the Church, wherein Christians did *not* separate into diverse *formed Congregations* of several Communions in the Sacrament, *Schisms*; much more may *such* Separations as you desire be so called.

2. We find it not alleaged as a *Cause* of your Separation, either that our Churches are *false*, or our Communion *ex se* unlawful; but onely *Scruple* of Conscience, that you cannot without sin as to you, partake in all duties and enjoy all ordinances, which

which is no *Cause* of separating; nor doth it take off *Causeless Separation* from being *Schism*, which may arise from *errours of Conscience*, as well as *carnal* and corrupt *Reasons*.

Therefore we conceive the *Causes* of Separation must be shewn to be such, as *ex Natura rei* will bear it out; which hath not *yet* been done, nor we think can be.

3. And now we desire you to shew out of *Scripture* and approved *Authors*, what you have learned concerning *Schism*: For the breaking off Members from their Churches which are *lawfully constituted Churches*: and from Communion in Ordinances dispensed according to *Gods word*, without *just* and sufficient *Cause ex natura rei* to justifie such Secession, and to joyn in other Congregations

gregations of *separate Communion*; either becauſe of *Cauſleſs* Scruple of their own Conſcience, or becauſe of *perſonal* failings in the *Officers* or *Members* of the Congregation from which they ſeparate, *hath been accounted Schiſm*, and the ſetting up *Altare contra Altare*.

And concurrently do *approved Authors* ſay, and we likewiſe conceive, that it is the *Cauſe* of the Separation which gives both *name* and *thing* to *Schiſm*. For if the cauſe be *unjuſt* or inſufficient, according to the Rule of the *Word* of God, let our Brethren tell us what *ſuch Separation* is.

It is our earneſt deſire and Prayer, that our Brethren might enjoy the Ordinances with the *Peace* of their *Conſciences* and of the *Church* alſo: or that they would rather deny themſelves of their

their *full liberty* in every point, then redeem it at the price of ſo much *danger* and diſquiet to the Churches of God, *p.* 74, 5, 6, 7.

Indep. The *Miniſters* of the Pariſh Churches are not ſuch as we can comfortably *joyn* with, and ſit down under.

Presb. We do not believe that you mean that onely ſuch ſhould be allowed to gather into *your* Congregations, who live under bad and *unprofitable Miniſters*, though that be the onely *medium* there uſed againſt our Reaſon.

Where the *Miniſtry* is without juſt exception, we refer it to your own *Conſcinces*, and to the practiſe of your *Congregations*, to ſay, how fit it is that the Members ſhould *ordinarily*, much leſs conſtantly, ſeek the Ordinances elſewhere. p. 84, 85.

We

We long to know, what Reformation of our *Parishes* will satisfie your Consciences; or how *this Kingdom* may be made the Kingdom of the *Lord* and of his Christ, better then by *dividing* it into several parts by the *bounds* of their *dwellings*: that all who give up their Names to Christ, may be *taught* and governed, and have all the Ordinances administred among them *suitable* to their *Conditions*, p. 102.

Indep. But it seems you would have us *for ever* to want the *Lords Supper*, which is not to be endured, *p.* 102.

Presb. 1. Why may not *some expedient* satisfie you in this, to prevent so great an evil as *Separation.*

2. We may *not do evil for any good end.* If a man should be brought

brought to such a *Streight* as that, either he must want the *Lords Supper*, or *separate* from the Congregation whereof he is a Member, he may here want the *Ordinance* (during this *Errour* of his Conscience) with less danger, than to purchase it by a sinful separation.

3. This is a strange and dangerous way of arguing, which may open a *gap* to as many *Divisions* and Subdivisions in the Church as the *Errours* are, unto which the minds of men are subject. And if this be allow'd, we desire you to consider how long, not *our* Churches onely, but *your own*, or any other Churches in the World, shall be free from *uncurable* unquietness.

Indep. It must be a *prejudice* to the Church we are in, if we *separate* from

from her in the Lords Supper: And yet you would have us live under their Government whom we prejudice, which seems unreasonable to us, *p.* 104.

Presb. If your *Errours* cause prejudice against you, is it unreasonable for you to be under the *Government* of that Church which is prejudiced by you? may you with good reason *Scandalize* the Church by *Separation*, and the Church have no reason to *govern* you; then *prejudicating* or scandalizing Errours are a *Supersedeas to all Government*? We do not then wonder that *Errours* and perverse opinions so much *abound*; it may be, they are all but the *mediums* to *liberty*, and exemptions from *Government*.

Indep. But living in a *Parish*, doth not make us *Members* of the Church.

Presb.

Presb. We grant it, a man must in order of *Nature* first be a Member of the *Church visible*, and then living in a *Parish*, and making *profession* of Christianity, he may claim admission into the Society of Christians within those *bounds*, and enjoy the Ordinances which are there dispensed.

Indep. Where is your *Christian Charity?* We would *edifie* our selves the best we can; and though we differ but in very *small* matters, you will not suffer us.

Presb. Can you not be *edified* without *Scandalizing* the Church of God? we leave to all men to judge whose *Charity* is greatest; theirs who labour to preserve *union*, or theirs who resolve to *separate* and break it? We think *Charity* binds Christians to prevent

prevent all *unjust* and needless Separation. We wonder at your *Charity*, that coming so near us in *Doctrine* and *worship*, nothing should content you but a *Separation*. p. 105, 106.

Indep. We cannot in Conscience set down, where we cannot enjoy *all the Ordinances*, p. 122.

Presb. 1. Have you *all* the Ordinances in *your own* Churches?

2. Do yon not hold *ruling Elders* to be an Ordinance? have you these? Or be *your* Churches without some one ordinance, and not *ours*?

3. To *determine Controversies of Faith*, & cases of conscience *judicially*, is an Ordinance: If you must be of no Church but where that is exercised, and the *liberty* of opinions *restrained*, your Churches would be soon destroyed: And *you* would find it,

we

we believe difficult to gather *more*.

Indep. This would prove the best means of *Uniformity* and Conjunction, to allow us *distinct Churches* according to our own Principles.

Presb. This is a *Riddle*; we wonder how *disjunction* can be the only way of *Conjunction*, and *Multiformity* of *Uniformity*, and *Separation* of *Communion*, and different Principles and Practises of Conformity.

What Churches under Heaven may we not hold Conjunction, Uniformity, and Communion with, upon *such terms?* p. 123.

Indep. But *tender Consciences* ought to be relieved.

Presb. We desire to know whether every Persons bare *pleadging* tenderness of Consci-

ence, shall be sufficient to warrant his *deserting* our Congregations, *p.* 49.

2. We much doubt, whether such *tenderness* as ariseth out of an opinion, *cui potest subesse falsum*; when the Conscience is so tender, that it may also be an *erring* Conscience, can be a sufficient ground to justifie such material Separation, as our Brethren plead for. For though it may bind to *forbear* or suspend the Act of Communion in that *particular*, wherein men conceive they cannot hold Communion without sin; yet, it doth not bind to follow such a *positive* prescript, as possibly may be diverse from the *Will* and Counsel of *God*: Of which kind we conceive this of *gathering separated Churches* out of other true Churches to be one, *p.* 51.

Inde

Indep. In case the *Lords Supper* be not administred in *purity*, a *removal* is allowed *ordinarily*: Now we would only gather our selves into other Churches, for *purer* enjoyment, as to our *Consciencis*, of all ordinances, *p.* 50, 51.

Presb. We conceive, the ground of your Separation from one Church and gathering others, to this end, that you may be preserved from sinning against your *Consciences*; and for the *purer* enjoyment of Ordinances, may to men of other judgments be a ground to crave *Toleration* for separating from Churches which are *pure*, and gathering *impure* and corrupt Churches out of them, *p.* 50.

It was never the meaning of the *Assemblies* to leave the Judgment of *pure* or impure *Ordi-*

nances to this Case, unto the alone discretion of a *particular* Person: But before any leave [illegible] *Parochial* Congregation, ordinarily he ought to declare the *Cause* of his grievance, that if it may be his removal may be *prevented*: Except he think fit to change *his dwelling*; in which Case his removal is *without offence*.

Indep. VVhy may it not be as lawful to go to a *separate* Congregation for relief, as to *remove* our dwelling to another *Parish*?

Presb. It is one thing to remove to a Congregation which is under the *same Rule*; another to a Congregation of a *different constitution* from the Rule. In the one a man *retains* his Membership; in the other, he *renounceth* it, *p.* 52.

Indep.

Indep. If the *pureſt* Churches in the World, unto our Judgement, in all *other* reſpects, ſhould impoſe as a condition in the *Sacrament* of the Lords Supper any one thing that ſuch tender Conſciences cannot Joyn in (as ſuppoſe, *kneeling*) if they remove from theſe Churches, and have *liberty* from the *State* to gather into other Churches, to enjoy this and other Ordinances, here is no *Separation*

Presb. 1. If a Church require that which is *evil* of any Member, he muſt forbear to do it; yet, without *Separation*; and waite on Gods *Providence* in the diſpenſation of that Church, till all remedies have been tryed.

2. He that is in this kind oppreſſed, may be relieved by *Appeal*, or change his *dwelling*.

3. They who thought *kneeling* in the Act of Communion to be *unlawful*, either in *England* or *Scotland* did *separate* or renounce Membership; but did some of them with *Zeal* and *Learning defend* our Churches against those of the *Separation*.

Indep But, we hope you will not question us, if we have *liberty* from the *State* to gather into other Churches.

Presb. The Nature of Separation is not to be measured by *civil Acts* or State, but by the *Word* of God: what notion you have of it we know not; but surely to leave all *ordinary* Communion in any Church with *dislike*, when *opposition* or *offence* offers it self, is to separate from such a Church in the *Scripture*; since such a Separation was not in the *Apostles* times, unless it were

were used by *false Teachers*; all who professed Christianity held Communion together, notwithstanding *differences* of Judgment or *Corruptions* in practise, *p.* 55.

Indep. Our Churches cannot be thought to be guilty of a plain and *total Separation*, unless we did wholly in all things differ, by setting up altogether *differing Rules* of Constitution, Worship and Government.

Presb. Of this Assertion we expect some proof: We read not the like in any *Author antient* or *modern*. Under this pretense *Novatians*, *Donatists*, all that ever were thought to *separate*, may shelter themselves; who themselves, boasting of their Separation (the most rigid Separatists) hold the same Rule of worship and government for substance with you.

We desire you to consider if every small and *circumstantial* difference amongst those who agree in most things, and those most *substantial*, shall be a sufficient ground to gather Churches out of Churches into a separate and distinct Communion, how the Churches of God shall ever be kept free from *Rents* and Divisions, and how the *Peace* thereof is possible to be preserved.

Indep. But as we hold your Churches to be true Churches, so we are ready to hold *occasional* Communion with them.

Presb. 1. You have estranged your selves from us *hitherto*, and we have reason to question, in what *sense* you account our Ministers and Churches *true*. 2. If you may *occasionally* exercise Acts of Communion with us once,

once, a second, a third time, without sin; we know no reason why it may not be *ordinarily* without sin: And then Separation and gathering Churches would have been *needless*.

To separate from those Churches *ordinarily* and visibly, with whom *occasionally* you may Joyn without sin, seemeth to be a most *unjust* Separation.

Indep. Suppose you do account our gathering Churches *sinful*, may not some things be *tolerated* which are thought *unlawful*.

Presb. Our Reason against *Toleration* is not founded upon the Supposition that nothing *unlawful* may be tolerated; but upon the supposition of unlawfulness to tolerate the *gathering Churches* out of true Churches.

And

And you do not once endeavour to prove, either that such *gathering*, or the *tolerating* thereof is lawful.

We are to debate the lawfulneſs of *forbearance*, and may inſiſt upon any proper *medium*, to that end; for clearing whereof the lawfulneſs or unlawfulneſs of that point of *Church gathering* is one of the moſt *neceſsary*.

Indep. If we do not gather into other Churches; *Multitudes* that cannot conform muſt live without *ſome Ordinances* all their dayes.

Presb. Of this before; but we anſwer, that you wave the main buſineſs, *viz.* whether there be any *Example* in Gods Word for gathering Churches out of Churches.

1. This

1. This opens a *gap* for all *Sects* to challenge the same *liberty* as their due. It should be considered.

2. Whether we must follow an *Erroneous Conscience* so far as to gather into *new* Churches.

3. Whether this be not denied by the Churches in *New-England.*

Indep. Is it not the *Right* of every man to *choose* his own *Minister?*

Presb. Certainly some would deny it, and it will be like to breed much *confusion.* Besides, the tolerated will have the greatest *priviledge* by it; they shall enjoy it *absolutely*, when those under the *Rule* cannot, without removing their *dwellings*, p. 64, 65.

Indep. Though we do separate, we are such as have given

ven *good Teſtimony of our Godlineſs and Peaceableneſs:* And we did not ſeparate till we had uſed *all means* in faithfulneſs to know the mind of Chriſt.

Presb. We ſhall not mind you how *Teſtimonies of Godlineſs* are not always infallible Protections againſt *Schiſm* or *Hereſie*; as in *Mileſius*, *Lucifer*, *Audæus*, &c.

We conceive that amongſt other means uſed in faithfulneſs, this ſhould be one; that each perſon give an account of his *Scruple* to the Elderſhip or Congregation where he dwells; that ſo he may either receive ſatisfaction, or have from them a Teſtimony of Godlineſs and Peaceableneſs.

Indep. But you uncharitably charge us with the guilt of Schiſm, though we do not ſay your Churches are falſe and not

not to be communicated with, which is hard measure.

Presb. We have answered this already, but further we say; albeit *Schism* consists not in every diversity of *opinion* or *practice*, but in an open *breach* of Christian love; yet we see not how you can acquit your selves even by *this Rule*; when you openly profess a necessity to *recede* from our Churches as *Members*, which while yet you acknowledge them to be true Churches of Christ.

Thus to depart from true Churches, is not to hold Communion with them *as such*; but rather by *departing*, to declare them to *be such*: Surely at best we may say of this course as the Philosopher did of the *Milesians*, *Milesii quidem non sunt insipientes, ea tamen agunt quæ insipientes.*

Indep.

Mark once for all, how unaptly the *Reflecter* would make all the ſtreſs of the Presbyterians Argument, to prove the Schiſm of the Independents, to bear upon the *endeavours* of their Churches to *reform*: For the Independents were as unſatisfied with *their Reformation*, as they are with their worſhip. For they ſay plainly, the *Reformation which the Aſſembly hath ultimately pitch'd upon ſatisfies not our Conſciences, as our Brethren know.* No, you every where find, they charge them with Separation from true Churches, and aggravate that charge from *their acknowledgment* of the truth of thoſe Churches from which they ſeparate.

Indep. But you endeavour our diſgrace, and caſt an *odium* upon us by the word *Schiſm.*

Presb. Your way would give coun-

countenance to a *perpetual Division* in the Church, still drawing away from the Churches under the *Rule*: And *Schism* differs no more from *Division*, then *Greek* from *Latine*.

We desire you, that by assuming *tenderness* of Conscience to your *dissenting* from the Rule *and establishment* of a *Church-way* or *Church-order* to your way and godly party, you would not reflect an *odium* upon us or the Churches uuder the *Rule*.

You know that to give countenance to an unjust or *causless* Separation from a lawful Church-Communion, is not far from giving countenance to *Schism*: Especially wheen the grounds, upon which this *Separation* is desired, are *such*, as upon which all other *possible scruples* may claim a like Indulgence, and so this *Toleration*

ration being the *first*, shall indeed but lay a Foundation, and open the Gap, whereat as *many Divisions* in the Church, as there be *Scruples* in the minds of men, shall upon the self same equity be let in, *p. 66.*

The

The Concluſion, with a Recapitulation.

OUR work, we ſee, was effectually done to our hands many years agon, both againſt the *Independents* and the *preſent Presbyterians:* whoſe practice in *gathering Churches*, and whoſe *Arguments* in defence of that practice are very much the ſame. And *both* are here abundantly confuted by theſe *Presbyterian* weighty Reaſons: Which indeed are ſuch, as took not their ſtrength from any peculiar *conditions* of the times when they were written; but are *now*, and ever will be of *equal* and invincible prevalency.

Therefore the *Dialogue* is as proper and seasonable *now*, as those *Papers* were *then*: Do but change the *Person* and *name* [Presbyterian] for the *Church* of *England*, and the whole is as *pertinent* to our *present* State as the Reader can wish. And indeed, what can the wit of the present *dissenters* add *new*, to the Argument as it was then managed? Or what have they said more for themselves? *Review* and judge.

The Independents *then pleaded.*

1. WE onely desire a *liberty* to worship God in Congregations of our own distinct from the *Parochial*.

2. We condemn not the *Parochial* Churches as false

3. W

3. We differ from you onely in ſmall matters.

4. We agree with you as to the ſubſtance of Doctrine and worſhip.

5. Yet we cannot joyn with you in all things without ſin.

6. And we cannot live without any one ordinance.

7. Therefore we joyn in another Congregation only for the enjoyment of all ordinances for our ſpiritual good.

8. Yet we will preſerve all Chriſtian Communion with the Saints in the Church Catholick.

9. We cannot be Members of that Congregation where our dwelling is.

10. However we will hold occaſional Communion with you.

11. This is no Schism, or countenance of Schism, or rigid separation.

12. We cannot approve or edifie by the Parish Ministers.

13. 'Tis the priviledge of every one to choose his own Pastor.

14. Living in a Parish doth not make Members of a Church.

15. Removal from one Parish to another is allowed, and why not to a separate Cogregation?

16. Tender Consciences ought thus to be relieved.

17. It is against Christian charity to deny this liberty.

18. This Liberty will prove the best means of Uniformity.

19. What if we have liberty from the State to gather Churches?

20. Some things may be tolerated that are thought unlawful.

21. Mul-

21. Multitudes that cannot conform, must live without some ordinances all their days.

22. Those that separate have given good Testimony of their Godliness and Peaceableness: And have used all means first to know the mind of Christ.

23. You charge us with Schism to render us odious.

All *these* were *Independent* Arguments in 1644. how they commensed to be *Presbyterian* in 1672. I know not: But this I know that *then* the *Presbyterians* were not shy to declare *gathering Churches out of our Churches* under all flourishes and little pretenses, was a *Schismatical* and *dangerous* Separation, and not to be *allowed*. For which, they gave the world, not onely their *Authority*,

but such *Reasons* as you have *heard*, but shall never *see answered*. Some of their Propositions follow.

Some of the Presbyterian Assertions, whereby they refelled the foresaid Independent pretenses for gathering Churches (as more at large appeareth in the Dialogue) are these.

1. OUr Parochial Congregations are true Churches.

2. To make one a Member of such a Church, it is sufficient that he *professeth Christianity, and lives in the Parish*, and he may claim Communion thereupon.

3. The old Non-Conformists did not separate from the *Parish Churches* or renounce Membership,

ſhip, though they thought *kneeling* at the Communion unlawful (and I may add, had as much cauſe to complain of *Perſecution*, and want of *Reformation*, as any have now) but did ſome of them with Zeal and Learning defend our Churches againſt thoſe of the *Separation*.

4. None ought to be indulged, but ſuch as agree with the eſtabliſhment as to the ſubſtance of *Doctrine* and *Worſhip*.

5. Theſe ſhould not be indulged ſo far, as to ſeparate and gather new Churches.

6. This is *Schiſm*, and the means of confuſion in the Church and in Families.

7. None are to be allowed to withdraw Communion in things wherein they *agree* with us: But in all *ſuch* things they ought to

retain Communion with the Congregation *where they live*.

8. The Separatists holding our Churches to be *true* Churches, is an *Aggravation* of their Separation.

9. To depart from Churches me acknowledg to be *true*, is not to hold Communion with them as *such*; but rather by departing, to declare them *not* to be such.

10. To leave all *Ordinary* communion in any Church with *Dislike*, when *Opposition* or *Offence* offers it self; is to Separate in the *Scripture*-Sense, and was not in being in the Apostles times, unless by *false* Teachers.

11. All who professed Christianity in the Apostles times, held Communion together, notwithstanding differences in *Judgment*, or corruptions in *Practice*.

12. The

12. The Judgment of pure and impure Ordinances, is not to be left to the *alone diſcretion* of a particular Perſon.

13. To Separate from thoſe Churches *Ordinarily* and Viſibly, with whom *occaſionally* you may joyn without Sin, ſeemeth to be a moſt unjuſt Separation.

14. It is one thing to Remove to a Congregation that is under the ſame *Rule*; another, to a Congregation of a *different* conſtitution. In the one, a man retaineth his Memberſhip, in the other he *Renounceth* it.

15. *Teſtimonies of Godlineſs* are no infallible Protections againſt Schiſm.

16. 'Tis no breach of Charity to hinder all unjuſt Separations.

17. A

17. A man may want the *Lords Supper* with leſs Danger, then to purchaſe it by a ſinful Separation.

18. The Church is not bound to Indulge a Liberty to *Erring* Conſciences, eſpecially to the evident diſturbance of her own Peace.

19. No pretences of tenderneſs of *Conſciences*, or of *Edification*, or of enjoying all *Ordinances*, or of holding Communion with us as *Saints* in the Church *Catholick*, or of *Occaſional* Communion with us as a particular Church, or of holding Communion with us *as far as they are able*, or that they cannot joyn with us *without Sin*, or laſtly, no acceptions that they take either againſt our *Officers* or *Members*: None of theſe, or any

any such, can warrant a *Separation* from us, or gathering new Churches out of ours. For these make not the *Cause* of a just separation, which ought to appear *ex natura rei.*

Remember from whence thou art faln.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 33. Line 2. Read, *Not only for Wrath, but also for Conscence sake*, Rom. 13. 5. p. 34. l. 14. dele *and*. p. 35. l. 18. r. *things*. p. 40. l. 1. r. *Subterfuges*. p. 54. l. 21. r. *should not be*. p. 78. l. 17. r. *our Government*.

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FINIS.